

# High-Speed Rail in Rochester

## Why Do We Need High-Speed Rail?

According to a recent memo from the Progressive Policy Institute:

- High-speed rail will create hundreds of thousands of well-paid jobs. By some measures, every \$1 billion spent in high-speed rail construction will create 15,000 direct jobs-and tens of thousand more will grow from operating and maintaining the train system. These are jobs that cannot be outsourced.
- High-speed rail makes economic sense. The United States population will increase from 300 million to more than 390 million by mid-century. Those citizens will need transportation, and high-speed rail is cheaper to build and causes much less environmental damage than new highways and airports.
- High-speed rail has a proven record of economic development. With station stops located every 30 or 40 miles between terminals, high-speed rail has spurred growth in rural France and Spain. Fast, efficient transportation could bring similar benefits to economically depressed Main Street.
- High-speed rail is a big step toward energy independence. Present day diesel powered trains use 27 percent less energy per passenger mile than cars and 21 percent less than airplanes, according the Oak Ridge National Laboratory. If high-speed rail corridors were operated with nonpolluting electric locomotives, they could reduce carbon dioxide emissions by as much as six billion pounds annually, according to the Center for Clean Air Policy.
- High-Speed rail is almost infinitely expansible. A double track railway, once in place, can meet heavy traffic needs with no additional capital expenditures except more trainsets. Highways and airports, on the other hand, require more lanes, and runways to accommodate greater traffic loads



The United States Department of Transportation [reported](#) that an investment in public transportation creates almost 20 percent more jobs than the same investment in building roads or highways.

## **High-Speed Rail: A Benefit for Rochester**

### **Economic Development**

- The Rochester/Finger Lakes region has historically been home to companies in the transportation industry. Investment in high-speed rail will potentially create enormous benefits for the companies that deliver products and services and manage security systems for rail networks.
- High-speed rail would facilitate easier city to city business travel i.e. Rochester to Albany or New York City, and allow passengers to make more productive use of travel time by permitting them to work while on board their train.

### **Urban Development**

- High-speed rail could facilitate access to conferences and other events at the Rochester Riverside Convention Center and BlueCross Arena
- High-speed rail could stimulate office development near the train station for multi-city service sector companies as well as condominium and apartment buildings for those commuting on rail.

### **Environmental/Energy**

- Carbon emissions per passenger mile traveled are significantly lower for passenger rail versus an automobile or airplane

### **Tourism**

- High-speed rail can allow for intercity travel, just as the Eurorail Pass does in Europe. Foreign visitors to New York City will have the ability to travel upstate to visit top tourist attractions including the George Eastman House, Strong Museum of Play, Finger Lakes, JazzFest, as well as performances at Eastman Theatre and the Blue Cross Arena.

### **Quality of Life**

- High-speed rail will facilitate the densification of the regional labor markets, creating two new markets: Buffalo-Niagara Falls/ Rochester with 966, 562 workers and Rochester/Syracuse with 747, 292. The central cities in these two markets would be an hour away from each other by train. This will allow Upstate New Yorkers the flexibility to pursue employment in another city without having to relocate.

